

Mastodon angustidens, a species of which the fossil remains are by no means uncommon in several localities of Europe. Cuvier is also disposed to refer to the same species the teeth of the Mastodon from Brazil and Lima, mentioned by Dr. W. Hunter in his observations on the *animal incognitum* from the Ohio.* The Megatherium has been scientifically described and illustrated in the works of Bru, Cuvier, and D'Alton, whose accounts are founded on a nearly complete skeleton of this stupendous quadruped which has existed in the Royal Museum at Madrid for more than half a century. The few deficiencies in its osteography have recently been supplied by the descriptions and figures given by Dr. Buckland† and Mr. Clift,‡ taken from remains of the Megatherium, brought by Sir Woodbine Parish from Buenos Ayres, and which were discovered in the bed of the Rio Salado, a tributary of the Rio Plata. Sir Woodbine Parish's collection from the same locality, includes also remains of other species of extinct Edentata, which have not yet been described. M. D'Orbigny, in his travels in South America (vol. i. p. 96.), states that, in the banks of the Parana, he found the fossil remains of a large quadruped, of the size of an Ox,—another quadruped of the size of a Cat, apparently of the carnivorous order;—and a third, a Rodent as large as a Rat.

This meagre condition of the historical part of the subject of South American fossils by no means arises from their actual scarcity. The writings of some of the old Spanish authors, for instance, Torrubia, Garcillasso, and others,§ contain frequent allusions to the bones of giants, who in times of old dwelt in Peru. Legentil, also, in 1723, speaks as an eye-witness of these Peruvian remains; and his guides pointed out to him the traces of the thunder-bolts, by which the Anaks of the New World had been exterminated. Bones and teeth of the Mastodon are, according to Humboldt, so abundant in a locality near Santa Fé de Bogota in Columbia, that to this day it bears the name of the "Field of Giants."

But independently of these indications, the abundance and variety of the osseous remains of extinct Mammalia in South America are amply attested by the materials for the following descriptions, collected by one individual, whose

* Philosophical Transactions, vol. lviii. p. 34. (1768.)

† Bridgewater Treatise, p. 139.

‡ Geological Transactions, vol. iii. p. 437. pl. 44, 45, 46.

§ Quoted by Cuvier, Ossem. Foss. Ed. iv. tom. ii. p. 351.

sphere of observation was limited to a comparatively small part of South America; and the future traveller may fairly hope for similar success, if he bring to the search the same zeal and tact which distinguish the gentleman to whom Oryctological Science is indebted for such novel and valuable accessions.

It is remarkable that all the fossils, collected by Mr. Darwin, belong to herbivorous species of mammalia, generally of large size. The greater part are referrible to the order which Cuvier has called Edentata, and belong to that subdivision of the order (*Dasypodidae*) which is characterized by having perfect and sometimes complex molar teeth, and an external osseous and tessellated coat of mail. The Megatherium is the giant of this tribe; which, at the present day, is exclusively represented by South American species, the largest (*Dasypus Gigas*, Cuv.) not exceeding the size of a Hog. The hiatus between this living species and the Megatherium, is filled up by a series of Armadillo-like animals, indicated more or less satisfactorily by Mr. Darwin's fossils, some of which species were as large as an Ox, others about the size of the American Tapir. The rest of the collection belongs, with the exception of some small Rodents, to the extensive and heterogeneous order Pachydermata; it includes the remains of a Mastodon, of a Horse, and of two large and singular aberrant forms, one of which connects the Pachydermatous with the Ruminant Order; the other, with which the descriptions in the following pages commence, manifests a close affinity to the Rodent Order.